



## STATE OF WASHINGTON

### DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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## **GUIDANCE DOCUMENT FOR STRUCTURAL PEST INSPECTORS**

### **Testing Requirements for New Licensees**

On July 1, 2003, a new Structural Pest Inspector (SPI) license type became effective. Individuals applying for the SPI license will no longer be tested in pesticide laws and safety. Emphasis will, instead, be placed on inspection criteria specific to SPIs.

With this new license type, holders can no longer provide guidance or make recommendations on the use of pesticides. In order to do this, you must possess a license in another appropriate area such as Commercial Applicator, Commercial Operator, or Commercial Consultant.

To help you meet the requirements of this new license type, individuals from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Washington State University, and private industry are developing a revised SPI examination along with new study materials. These will primarily be for people requiring the new license, e.g., structural pest inspectors, home inspectors, real estate appraisers – anyone reporting on wood destroying organisms (WDOs), damage, or conducive conditions leading to the development of WDOs.

Until these materials are completed, we will be using the existing exam and study materials, with some modifications. To have adequate knowledge for passing the SPI exam (with a 70% or higher) you should review the following materials:

**Pest Management Study Manual for Pest Control Operators** (WSU Publication MISC 0096)  
Study sections 1 through 6 and section 12.

**A Key to Identification of Pacific Northwest Wood-Destroying Pests Based on Wood Damage** (WSU Extension Bulletin 1814)

Be able to recognize the symptoms and signs of these pests.

**Rules Relating to Wood Destroying Organisms, WAC 16-228-2005 through WAC 16-228-2060** (if not enclosed, go to <http://agr.wa.gov/PestFert/Pesticides/docs/WdoRules.pdf>)

You should be familiar with the following: 1) definitions, 2) WDOs and signs of their presence, 3) conducive conditions leading to the development of WDOs, 4) information to include in a WDO report, and 5) how to effectively diagram your findings.

[Please note: the exam includes identification of actual samples of WDOs and their damage. Individuals failing the SPI exam have stated that this is the most difficult portion to master, both on the test and during inspections.]

There are many other excellent resources on WDOs and inspection criteria. Following are some examples:

**Handbook of Pest Control** by Arnold Mallis, editor (1998)

**National Pest Control Association Field Guide to Structural Pests** by Eric Smith and Richard Whitman (1992)

**Scientific Guide to Pest Control Operations** by Lee Truman, Gary Bennett, and William Butts (1976)

**Urban Entomology** by Walter Ebeling (1975)

In addition, there are numerous resources available on the Internet regarding WDOs, structural pest inspections, and building construction. Use caution when viewing these web pages; usually no independent source has reviewed them for accuracy. Use keywords such as “wood destroying organism” or structural pest inspection” to view these Internet sites.

Direct your questions about the new requirements to any of the following staff:

- Cliff Weed, Compliance Services Program Manager (360) 902-2036
- Dr. Dan Suomi, PCO Specialist (360) 902-2044
- Margaret Tucker, Certification & Training Manager (360) 902-2015
- Hugh Watson, Certification & Training Specialist (360) 902-2016